

# **Recycling in arts, education and contemporary theatre: Documentation and report on an open seminar from the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> of December 2008**

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## **Preface**

The Norwegian Theatre Academy (NTA) is proud to publish this report from our seminar held in Fredrikstad, December 2008.

The seminar, kindly organized by Associate Professor Knut Ove Arntzen at the University of Bergen, was focussing on pedagogical approaches to acting and theatre making. The title of the seminar suggests that the way we think around theatre practices and the teaching of it, happens in a cyclic way where we re-cycle and use old methods blended with new ideas and new methods. The idea is that we constantly re-create our methods in the process of interpreting them, seen from the shifting viewpoints we experience as we move through time and historical and social contexts.

For NTA it is important to discuss methodological issues with colleagues and artists in order to be part of this necessary recycling in the arts. Focussing on modern and contemporary theatre practices and methods, we depend on an open discourse around our own ways of working. We constantly negotiate the past and the present in order to shape our future, and we like to keep this dialogue in process. We therefore thank all those who kindly contributed to the seminar and the discussions.

Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk  
Artistic Director, Acting  
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## Introductory text by Knut Ove Arntzen

In "Mass Media Culture" Jean Baudrillard writes (Baudrillard, *Revenge of the Crystal*, London 1999, pp. 64-65) that one of the characteristics of our society in relation to professional knowledge and personal development is *recycling*. Baudrillard uses the term "recycling" when discussing the demand of being updated, to be professionally informed and to have your cultural baggage in order. Recycling as a metaphor can be a tool used to obtain a better understanding of how the use of theatrical effects works on broadening the borders of how to relate to an art work situationally and through both referencing and paraphrasing. The same goes for the way that an audience perceives or experiences references and effects used in an artistic work, which demands curiosity and a sense of experiencing. With an open attitude, the audience makes choices of how to interpret the signs. The aim of the seminar was to shed light on and discuss *recycling* in relation to arts education in the context of contemporary theatre and new quests for understanding methods. The following report is based on the seminar presentations given in Fredrikstad, in addition to an article on recycling. Each contribution to this report should be seen in its own context as well as in the context of the seminar. Hopefully, it did indeed shed some light on the question of recycling with regard to pedagogics and the general problem of education in the scenic arts.





## Presentation of the speakers

The speakers were from Finland, Great Britain and Norway.

In the following, a presentation of the speakers:

**Knut Ove Arntzen, chair of the seminar**, is an associate professor of theatre studies at the University of Bergen, more specifically for the Institute for linguistics, literature and aesthetic studies. He has for many years been a theatre critic in newspapers and magazines, and has been a regular visiting professor in teaching postmodern theatre and performance at the Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas, Lithuania, as well as at the Theatre Academies in Helsinki and Oslo. His latest book is entitled, *Det marginale teater*, and is published by Alvheim & Eide, Laksevåg 2007.

**Annette Arlander** will contribute her experience from many years of teaching at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, in addition to her background as a performance artist. Arlander is currently directing the MA programme in Performance and Theory at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki.

**Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk** is an associate professor and head of acting department at the Norwegian Theatre Academy at Østfold University College in Fredrikstad. Eeg-Tverbakk is also an experienced curator and dramaturge.

**Hans Henriksen** is an associate professor and head of directors' education at the Faculty of Scenic Arts at the Oslo National Academy of Arts (KHIO). Henriksen is also a renowned stage director, working in various theatres in both Norway and Denmark.

**John Keefe** is a freelance university lecturer in theatre pedagogy and drama, especially in connection with the London City University. He has recently contributed to the publications *Physical Theatres: A Critical Introduction* and *Physical Theatres: A Critical Reader* on Routledge. He will speak about the new approach to theatre aesthetics and pedagogy in relation to the recycling metaphor.

**Erik Söderblom** is professor and former vice rector of the Theatre Academy in Helsinki, Finland, where he has been the head of the Swedish Institution at the academy. Söderblom is a renowned stage director in opera, music theatre and drama theatre, and has recently been appointed artistic director of the Helsinki Festival.



# **How to deal with methodological challenges in an Academy of applied scenic arts?**

**By Camilla Eeg-Tverbakk**

The Norwegian Theatre Academy (NTA) was established about 13 years ago. The Bologna reform was built in to the structure; our teaching is module and workshop based. We work with four main modules, which run throughout the three years of the bachelor education. Those are skills, methods, laboratories and productions. These modules can be filled with a range of different workshops. I perceive the structure that has been laid out as useful and flexible. It offers a space for the education at NTA to be in constant flux and motion in order to keep its focus on research, questioning methods and aesthetical forms and conventions within a broad range of stage arts, or live arts.

I am often asked, both from students and outsiders, what our method is. The fact that this question is asked so often, I find to be very interesting. In my mind I question (back) why there is so much focus on method in this art form? I try to point to the difficulty of choosing *one* method in relation to the existing diversity within contemporary art.

When I took on the position as artistic director for the acting program at NTA, I had for some years been working with contemporary dance, visual art and performance art. I had myself taken distance to my own background in physical theatre, because I found a lot of theatre, honestly, quite boring. I realised that I had spent many years looking into the techniques and skills of theatre making, but ended up not knowing why I wanted to make theatre, and also what to communicate to an audience. Especially in visual arts, I found that there had been a shift and a greater interest and focus on content rather than form. This is a shift that could be said to be a result of conceptualism and a focus on recycling, where artists are becoming less concerned about developing one form - or specific craft, and more interested in choosing and mixing from all existing forms and tools in order to best express particular concepts, ideas, and themes.

In an arts education on a BA level, I find it difficult to balance between skills and what we at NTA call laboratories and productions, which is the more experimental and creative part of the education. In the theatrical landscape that we have around us today, what I experience to be the most interesting is the fact that a diversity of forms and genres occur on all kinds of stages. It is no longer solely the traces from naturalism that rules the institutional theatres. How can we educate actors and scenographers to become artists that are

flexible enough to work in this broad field? I believe one challenge is to become conscious about the normative conventions of the theatre field. In order to develop, we have to constantly keep questioning what we know, what is “good” and “bad” as well as trying to understand what quality may consist of at a given time and place.

As NTA represents the experimental branch of Norwegian theatre education, we also have to look creatively at the methods we teach. We research into what methods can be developed from contemporary performance practice, something that for most part is a mix – or a recycling - of traditions, formal expressions, and genres. The challenge is of course to be able to communicate some substance in order for the students not to feel lost. However, it still *is* confusing to be a student at NTA. However, we try to guide the students through this complexity to find their own ground to stand on. But then again, globalisation has revealed that our world is a rather confusing place.

I have come to see that our “base”, “root” or “method” lies within the combination of practice and theory, which means form, content and context. Our method is based in understanding how to develop a concept (an idea) for a piece of theatre or performance, to have knowledge of different forms in order to find the right way to express your idea, and finally to find the right context to present it. Understanding your context is both theoretical as well as practical. You need a practical understanding of your chosen place of performance in order to come into dialogue with an audience. In addition you need to be able to contextualize your work in relation to the discourse of historical and contemporary art. It is also important to understand compositional structures (dramaturgy), which include body (presence), movement, sound, text, light, space and objects and how they can function and serve the whole picture in different ways. When it comes to skills, there is a base in all theatre making, which for an actor is to have an expressive body (many training forms can lead to this), and an expressive voice.

This expressiveness of the actor is connected to play! Play is a method that most people over 20 in the western world, needs to re-learn, and it is a method that can be used in all forms, and combination of forms, of theatre and performance. Play is creative. It does not respect methods and traditions for the sake of it, but mixes and recycles them playfully. The point is that play is not concerned with exposing skills or being “believable”, it is concerned with going into what the play is about and use it as a testing ground for social structures and communication. Very often I experience that playfulness on stage does communicate and invites the audience into the theatre as a common playing space, and very often I experience how play is suffocated by skills and form.

What I hope to communicate is that we try to look at the traditional theatre training in Norway (which is our context), and ask where it came from and how it developed historically and contextually. We also look at other methods in the same way, not only from theatre but also other art forms, and from that we ask which parts of these methods are useful to express contemporary issues to contemporary audiences. Where do we have to look further back in history, or look at contemporary theatre practices to prepare our students for the flexibility that I believe theatre, in an international perspective, will be asking for in the coming years.

Naturally our education represents an aesthetic taste or universe. Our point of departure and our references are linked to recent traditions of visual theatre, performance theatre and the movements in theatre and art from the early Avant Garde. Frequently quotes are from people like Robert Wilson, Hotel Pro Forma, Peter Brook, Forced Entertainment, Christoph Mahrtaler, Frank Castorff, Gob Squad, Raffaello Sanzio, Rimini Protokoll and many others.

At the European League of International Artseducation (ELIA) conference in Gothenburg 2008, the predominant issues that were being discussed concerned how we can prepare art students for the coming challenges of the global community. Much emphasis was put on the word *responsibility*. What does this mean in terms of education in live arts?

To me it means that having the chance to speak in public is a privilege that is not granted to everyone, and that therefore it matters what artists put out there in the public space. Students should think about how they want to use this opportunity. Perhaps it is time to speak up for the other, rather than focussing on self-realization? Or - Is it at all possible to speak for someone else? Perhaps it is rather about teaching students how to engage audiences, how to initiate conversations between people, how to expose our habits and ask relevant questions?

I think it is important to teach students how to relate to people outside of the rehearsal spaces. Perhaps theatre students need to learn better how to act as connectors and translators and how to create platforms for exchange and dialogue?

I believe engagement to be a key word: How to be engaged and how to engage others? It becomes a question of which spaces we choose to create in. How we situate ourselves as artists and how we negotiate with the people and the complexities that already inhabit the performance spaces. What stories do we want to tell and to whom and where? By understanding how reality is stored in

every aspect of existence (light, sound, text, image, poetry, space, movement, actions) it becomes difficult to divide teaching into bits and pieces. We need to explore how it all functions together. At the same time, it *is* difficult to know if students have enough tools as well as the ability to see a broader picture and how their work connects, disconnects, questions and affirms the perceived reality in different ways. It is a question of balance, taking some chances, and live with the uncertainty of life.

The tension between tradition, existing techniques, institutional demands and creative innovation, which the students often experience at NTA, I believe is a necessary resistance to struggle with in order to find integrity and discover ones own driving force, preferences, motivations and contexts.

Our methods are continuously formed and re negotiated with our students. This is challenging and sometimes frustrating because there is no one there to provide the one formula that will help the students solve their problem. The learning is about finding your own way. You could also say that the most important thing to learn at NTA is *how to learn*, and how to develop and practically use knowledge. This connects to the most useful skill of any artist: to be able to see the perceived reality from different perspectives. It is a skill, which can become very valuable in the future. My hope is that students will be able to continue a dialogue and experimentation, which can contribute to develop the field of theatre and performance, and expand the understanding and the possibilities of what acting and scenography can represent as artistic professions.

It is the re – combination of forms, methods and other impulses that can create something original. Two of our former students who graduated spring 2007, Veronika Böckelmann and Severine Wuyler made something they called a “theatre installation” at one of the islands in the Oslo Fjord during the summer 2008. The project is called “Tyskerjenter” referring to the Norwegian girls who had relationships to German soldiers during the occupation between 1940 –45. The Island where the project was performed was the site for a camp for these women where they were interrogated and kept for 11 months right after the liberation. The piece is both theatre, performance art, installation and a discursive site specific work.

One of the audiences asked where you learn to create something like this. It is off course the result of the talent of these two young women, but it is also a fact that they have been exposed to a broad field of impulses at NTA.







# **Recycling sources and experiencing physical theatre in educating professionals.**

**By John Keefe**

Our beginning.

‘re’: from the Latin, a prefix meaning ‘back’ or ‘again’, but in the development of the English language since the 13thC. almost exclusively a prefix in formations of the latter sense ‘again’.

To do something with some ‘thing’ again.

There is an equation that may be set out as theatre-recycling-environment; an equation concerning theatre’s environmental responsibilities and it’s using/wasting of resources. I will not be discussing this as such but it is a trope of theatre-recycling that will have ever greater impact and demand on us as our present system seemingly devours itself. Perhaps we will have to reuse the same decors in our shows, consume less energy, reduce the spectacle of over-consumption of resources; to give new meanings to ‘poor theatre’.

So, for the purposes and themes of this seminar; the doing of something with some ‘thing’ (signs, ideas, themes, objects, the body) in our arts education and theatres. Too often, this is merely re-using as a repeating or re-iterating of these things (offering a nominal claim to or patina of ‘newness’). Thus working from Walter Benjamin, the techniques of electro-mechanical or digital reproduction that re-circulate our art leaving that art, but not our perception of it, as it is.

Or such re-use may become a re-working, a re-thinking or re-constituting that allows some ‘different’ artifact or understanding to be seen, to emerge.

In this sense we can think of re-cycling; what is done with the ‘re-things’? For what purpose and intention, what is revealed? How is the re-working used to confront, to challenge, to interrogate? In other words, what is the position and relationship of the ‘thing’ or ‘re-thing’ to the status quo? To adopt Brecht, does the familiar remain familiar and the strange remain strange or is the familiar made strange and the strange made familiar such that we re-look at what we think and feel we know? For the theatre, this latter comes about - unavoidably and inescapably- through the practitioner and spectatorial re-cycling and re-working of aesthetic and ethical principles made manifest in each era by each theatre, by each style and genre of theatre; by the politics of theatre.

This becomes the first of my re-cycled themes.

The seminar invites us to take Baudrillard's notion of 'recyclage' or professional retraining in our careers, to be informed and up to date, as our starting point. Perhaps in a wider sense, to be up to date with fashion, the latest ideas, the newest music and so on. But I would suggest that the key notion in this chapter, perhaps the whole book comes a page further on and provides my premise for this seminar.

What the acculturated receive is not culture, but *cultural recycling* ... They get to be 'in the know', to 'know what's going on' ... on a monthly or yearly basis ... that low-intensity constraint which is perpetually shifting like fashion and which is the absolute opposite of culture conceived as:

- 1 an inherited legacy of works, thought and tradition;
- 2 a continuous dimension of theoretical and critical reflection – critical transcendence and symbolic function.

(Baudrillard, 1998: 101)

In his anxiety to condemn mass culture, to criticize with some justification (following Veblen) the conspicuous consumption of culture as commodity, the commoditization of culture, Baudrillard uses the term 'recycling' in a too narrow sense and derogatory tone. 'Cultural recycling' becomes a term of abuse aimed at all those who fall victim to the seductions of fashion, who are in thrall to mass culture.

But we are all equally consumers of ephemeral fashions as we are of the great canon and legacy, of fun at the circus and *King Lear*, of celebrity affairs and affairs of state. Conditioned by his times, his own concerns and ideological perspectives, Baudrillard here stands for an intellectual discomfort with and arrogance toward human agency, and thus paradoxical choice and knowingness and human contrariness. So against 1) and 2), we can place the perpetuating –recycling- of equally influential superstitions and irrationalities and faiths and beliefs across generations and eras.

In receiving any kind of performance text I am a knowing spectator; I know it is a fiction of some kind or other but accept it as a form of truth. I know what to read and how to read what is on stage, I know what will affect me and why. I know that at its best and worst, what I am receiving and accepting will allow me to feel ideas and think feelings of all kinds.

I do this on the basis of agency.

I do this on the basis of what I know and what I re-cycle and what I re-define. This is a necessary dramaturgy of re-cycling.

This becomes the second of my re-cycled themes.

Thus I choose and know what I am buying, what I am consuming, what I give regard and disregard to. I know something is 'rubbish' but still choose to see

it. I make these choices on the basis of knowledge and prejudice and feelings located in the material self that comes from my various inheritances: my cognitive-physiological- biological self, my en-cultured self, my socialized self.

I have these inheritances as the result of re-cyclings.

What Baudrillard fails to see is that 'recycling' in this sense is a necessary condition of both cultural stasis and cultural change.

Far from cultural recycling being a matter of disdain and dismissal, I would suggest it is at the heart of our being as individuals in a social and cultural framework that we both inherit but vary and thus re-structure and re-construct and re-define. Re-cycling is the mechanism and process(es) by which I, acting as both personal agent and collective agent, frame and re-frame the world, order and re-order the world, and thus inhabit and change the world. It did not begin in the 1990's as has been suggested.

We may simply repeat the past, we may abuse the past, we may learn from the past and thus change our present and future.

Recycling both holds us into and enables us to out-reach the worlds we inherit and inhabit and imagine. Re-cycling sustains the fabric of our culture for better and worse. It is the necessary, pragmatic element in the dynamic of change. It is one of the axioms of human life and culture.

As such, this is the third of my re-cycled themes.

In the spirit of this approach and the premises implied, I can re-use and thus re-cycle some of my own previous materials to introduce these themes. These previous expressions are proven to 'work' and are thus most suitable for my purpose here.

The sources and sites of such previous using are, of course, properly acknowledged.

Minsky coined the term 'society of mind' to describe the evolved human cognitive system as a vast nexus of individual processes of genetic evolution, cultural evolution and personal experience he calls 'agents'. Such agents are the combined activity of multiple and specialised cognitive processes aroused in actions, themselves arousing further actions.

Or citing Geertz as a bridge between the cultural and the physiological:

The Ice Age appears (to be) ... a time in which were forged nearly all those characteristics of man's existence which are most graphically human: his thoroughly encephelated nervous system, his incest-taboo-based social structure, and his capacity to create and use symbols. The fact that these distinctive features of humanity emerged together in complex interaction with one another rather than serially...suggests that man's nervous system does not merely enable him to acquire culture, it

positively demands that he do so if it is going to function at all. (Geertz 2002; 67-68)

Re-cycling is genetic and material.

Those cognitive, psychological and neurological roots of individual and social behaviours and actions experienced as empathy and reciprocal responses:

(Spinoza) said that our mind is a very specific bodily process ... biology and neurology have shown that the processes ... are material and physical. (Murray & Keefe 2007: 135)

... emotion induction sites trigger a number of signals toward other brain sites ... and toward the body (Damasio 2000: 69)

Mirror neurons are pre-motor neurons that fire when the monkey performs object-directed actions ... but also when the animal observes somebody else performing the same class of actions ... present data show that the intentions behind the actions of others can be recognized by the motor system using a mirror mechanism (Iacoboni *et al* 2005: 529-32).

Re-cycling is social and cultural. It is a form of virtuous and necessary stealing. That is, those discursive and material formations that we may discuss as (necessarily) acquired dispositions manifested by a self-willed social agent within the necessary given conditions. We can consider these under three headings that represent distinct but intertwining ethical stances:

the 'habitus' of Bourdieu; a set of embodied values, dispositions, attitudes and patterns of behavior by which we live our daily, apparently individual, lives. (see Danaher 2002: 37)

the 'structures of feeling' of Williams;

... meanings and values as they are actively lived and felt ... practical consciousness of a present kind, in a living and inter-related continuity. (Williams 1977: 132)

All that is lived and made, by a given community in a given period, is related ... although this is not always easy to see.

(Williams 1973: 9)

the 'Hyle' (hi-le) of Husserl;

... the body at the basic level of conscious experience; the lived, embodied consciousness ... the 'lived body' .... Not merely the corporeal body but the body which has intentionality, motivation and which senses-feels itself, has awareness of it-self. (Murray & Keefe 2007: 61)

This is the ‘habitual body’ and, if we borrow from behavioral economics and sociology, suggests the ways in which our habits – our re-cycling’s - frame what we read and how we read it. (see Ariely, 2008)

Some 15 months ago, Knut Ove Arntzen and I first played around with the notion of ‘recycling’, sitting in a pub in London. We played with terms such as ‘rescuing’, ‘refinding’, ‘restoring’, ‘reconstituting’, ‘stealing’, ‘hybridity’. I sketched out a diagram that resembled the stave lines and bar lines from music notation representing the diachronic and the synchronic respectively. We played with the notion of theatre ideas. We are still playing with all this but a first attempt to outline such a model of re-cycling for the theatre and academy may be offered here.

What are recycled are those deep principles and tropes of human culture that endure, have duration; that seem to run through all eras of any culture and through all cultures.

The axiomatic, diachronic stave lines of culture;

- body-mind
- actor-presenter
- character-persona
- text-presentation
- spectator
- site-space
- scenographies-graphics.

They are replicated and transmitted as the ‘agents’ identified by Minsky, or as the ‘memes’ identified by Dawkins or the ‘archetypes’ identified by Jung. Units of culture that structure the narratives and narrativising of cultures and societies; that are transmitted and replicated and imitated, and which our intelligence enables us to learn, but also to culturally modify and adapt within and across lifetimes.

Thus, by deep principle or trope I mean those axiomatic truths that lie at the foundations and roots of human consciousness and cultural cognition that underlie the various routes of emergence.

Let us consider a practical example. Imagine a baby elephant taken to see his mother who is chained by her leg in a barred wagon. Through the bars the tips of their trunks strain and then touch, entwine. Simple coloured cels evoking the mother-child archetype that re-cycle our deepest visceral memories and emotions

The relationship between such principles and their manifestations is dialectic and symbiotic. These principles and tropes are re-worked to be manifested synchronically, as specific outcomes of styles or genres or individual works. These are the synchronic bar lines of culture.

We may see neo-principles of hegemonic orthodoxy that have survival and currency for an extended period but which eventually expire or change. I am reminded here of the Platonist or Neo-Platonist ‘chain of being’ that ordered the orthodox understanding of the world:

(Ulysses): O, when degree is shak'd, Which is the ladder of  
all high designs, The enterprise is sick ... Take but degree away ...  
And hark what discord follows!

*(Troilus and Cressida, 1:3)*

But from such specific orthodoxy, the world is turned up-side-down, evolves, changes; new ideas emerge from the orthodoxy. A neo-principle of a particular hegemony passes and is replaced by some new one but here the deeper trope of order remains.

Let me offer some examples from both the academy and the theatre. Both institutions may be characterized as ‘meme vehicles’ or ‘agent pools’; means of inculcating, transmitting, preserving, re-circulating, interrogating, re-working, re-cycling units of culture.

The academy may pass on and perpetuate a meme as an embedded, received idea that is a form of false knowledge; for example, the continuing mistranslation and misunderstanding of Brecht’s ‘Verfremdung’ as ‘alienation’ (the ‘Entfremdung’ of philosophy and sociology), rather than the ‘estranging or distancing or de-familiarising to understand’ that Brecht is aiming for.

The academy may be the repository of an enduring meme or archetypal idea that can be used and reused; for example ‘katharsis’. A term from a specific culture and dramaturgy still casting a long cultural shadow, yet which stands for that principle of a learning empathy and understanding by one human from the actions of another human, and found in all theatres, including Brecht’s.

The academy or training school will repeat and re-present those accepted fundamentals of approaches to acting styles and skills we associate with systems and methods; are thus instrumental in perpetuating and re-circulating the present hegemony of realism-naturalism but also occasionally, via some kind of re-cycling, provoking a rejecting response that tilts our students to other body forms and styles.

The academy, as a ‘meme vehicle’ will be part of a process and system concerned with ‘an inherited legacy of works, thought and tradition’ and ‘a continuous dimension of theoretical and critical reflection’. Such reflection, paradoxically, of course changes, alters, helps evolve the original legacy itself. A virtuous re-cycling, perhaps.

In our theatres, such a deep principle and trope would be the theatre space (as indicated already) that contains a place for the spectator and a place for the

actor-performer, within which there is a spectator and an actor-performer, in a dialectical, symbiotic and dramaturgical relationship. The spectator is a knowing participant and receiver, the actor-performer is a knowing representer-re-presenter and transmitter.

The manifestations are all those theatres and productions and performances that we experience or know about (directly and indirectly) or read about or learn about. Within any production we find that which remains the same, and that which is recycled and reworked and re-used. I want to use a personal timeline for one particular play to illustrate that which remains (the principles of the play-text) and that which changes – the manifestations in performance.

My play is *A Midsummer Nights Dream*.

9 productions seen, 1 production of my own, 1 production not seen but known. The ‘dramatis personae’ remain the same; the theme and fact of return - from Athens to wood to Athens remains; the returning as same but different remains; Oberon tells us “I am invisible and will overhear their conference”; Puck is dispatched to ‘girdle the earth in forty minutes’; Bottom is ‘translated’ and enjoys his own particular dream; we are asked to accept ‘magic’ and so on.

Given these necessary ‘same-nesses’, what then are the differences apart from the actors, scenographies, inflections and emphases, the theatre spaces? Each production recycles these ‘same-nesses’ via the particular actors, scenographies, spaces and stages; the different stage pictures of the same play made their own by each spectator in each era in the same shared experience that is theatre.

So I saw my first “Dream” in 1970; I remember an ‘open-air’ performance and the shallow grass amphitheatre.

My own production in 1985 where I tried to show the autocracy of Athens, or the dignity of the workers in their performance, or the dark side of the wood and it’s fairies – the dream as partial nightmare- by placing the wood around the audience.

The several deadly versions seen across 38 years set in different periods with different costumes and different actors but simply reproducing the play; offering a nominal patina of difference.

The production for which I was performance dramaturge in 1997 where I tried to bring out the asymmetric resolution of the 4 lovers entanglements.

The Lepage staging in 1992 that reduced the play’s layers to a mono-vision of mud-pit and misguided ‘concept’ of spectacle.

The production of Peter Brook in 1970; not seen (to my regret) but known and, from the evidence, to be regarded as a ‘re-visioning’ that releases the play. Not only in the visual effects of the staging, its overt physicality, its relocating to a ‘bare’ space filled by the staging and the inviting in of the spectators imagination, but its sharing of the experience with the audience.

One small example from the closing lines and stage direction note:

Give me your hands if we be friends,  
And Robin shall restore amends (1)

(1) All off stage and into the auditorium, shaking hands with the audience.

(Brook 1974: 85a-85b)

Or an example that is of this moment; I noticed whilst in Oslo on Wednesday that the National Theatre is showing *Rosmersholm* and *Brand*. I cannot judge these unseen but can ask what 'new' can be said by more productions of such well-known plays? Will these merely be re-statings of the plays by the present directors, actors, scenographies? Will these be 'deadly theatre' or 're-visionings'?

The play-text may be regarded as a form of enduring original that is recycled through a history and variety of productions as a series of palimpsests. Each subsequent production 'rubs out' and overwrites those before but which remain as opaque shadows, as half-hidden spectres, memories or retained knowledge that affect each staging and spectatorial experience.

Each production inevitably and inescapably recycles and reuses and redraws what has gone before; both a 'conscious kind of recycling' as Knut Ove Arntzen has discussed and an inherited recycling from habits and experiences. Thus all theatres and all productions are forms of hybridity of the 'before' and the 'now'.

This then emerges as a fourth theme.

The spectator draws on and is reminded of and thus mediates what they are watching by what has gone before. The performance text is formed and deformed and reformed as a spectatorial process. We bring our own ghosts whether personal, cultural, social, to what we see and experience as agents inhabiting a shared world. This makes re-cycling an inevitable form of 'stealing' and thus perhaps a notion that offends us. We are driven by desire, by art and funding policies, by competition to create what is labelled the 'new'. It offends us to be confronted by the counter-notion that re-cycling is necessary to the 'new'.

But re-cycling is also a liminal and subliminal dynamic in our cultural flows and rhythms. Thus as teachers in the academy we colour the 'memes' and 'agents' and 'archetypes' we both reiterate and re-cycle, and thus change these in big or small ways.

As academics, we colour the material we are drawing on and thus, whilst reiterating, also re-cycle it in some big or small way.



As students we receive the transmitted material and vary it, recycle it through our own growing experiences.

As theatre-makers we both draw on and try to escape what has been done already; we repeat and recycle at the same time.

As spectators we mediate from ourselves.

As stated, I am inevitably recycling –by choice and by default- ideas and materials from earlier works in this paper.

If we are passing on the craft secrets - the totems and taboos – of our theatres, are these now diluted in our mediatised and global cultures?

Perhaps we should be teaching principles rather than simply systems and methods; be teaching the place of archetypes, totems and taboos; be teaching the basic skills rather than particular skills and thus teaching the tools to learn? As was said in the final plenary, to be teaching thinking not thoughts.

The analogy was made between theatre and team games eg. football. In the theatre the outcome is known but in the latter it is not; a game played between roughly equal teams within the rules will turn on a small difference to give an outcome that may be predicted but is unknown. But the theatre outcome is always known when a play-text is being presented. The presentation may turn on small moments, but Nora must always walk through that door. How the actress gets Nora to that exit may affect our perception and understanding of that leave taking preordained by the play-text; the exit is repeated and recycled and maybe, renewed.

We may play with the absence-presence of Nora, eg. the figure leaves but a (her) doll remains; the spectator reads the ambiguity of leaving and remaining. When the actor-as-shaman looks at me, I may have access to the ‘realm of the dead’. But as a knowing spectators we always know we are watching a ‘pretence’. The spectator allows the actor to be shaman by sharing in the making of the pretence. I then enjoy, learn from, have ‘frisson’ from such making, such liminal pretence-making.

To repeat.

I am inevitably recycling –by choice and by default- ideas and materials from works already given, published, or presently in preparation in this paper. These are acknowledged as conventions and courtesies demand and serve to exemplify the principles and practices I am exploring and suggesting.

So, as a closing coda, 2 further images from my own ‘before’s’

- a dramaturgical carousel turning very slowly, now recycling the same issues and concerns into a blurred focus every decade.
- on this carousel ghosts and dreams from our histories that haunt our rhetoric, our practices, our anxieties, our desires, our renewals.

These ghosts become the frames and lens that shape our present dramaturgies.

The ghosts of neo-dualisms and neo-romanticisms and theatre epigones that haunt our innovations and explorations.

The ghosts that haunt and inform our theatre re-cyclings and re-definings and 're-things'.

Afterwords.

This is a slightly revised and expanded version of the paper given at the 'Recycling in Arts Education and Contemporary Theatre' symposium, Norwegian Theatre Academy, Fredrikstad, December 2008. As such, it benefits from the papers and discussions running across the days and evenings of the event, for which I express my acknowledgement.

The essay purposely retains certain elements of the presentation; as a piece about theatre, it seems right that the performance colour and flavour of the delivered paper should be in this printed version.

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# **On Telling the World and "Recycling" in the New Theatre**

**by Knut Ove Arntzen**

New dramaturgical tendencies in visually based project theatre came about in several places in Europe at the beginning of the 1990s. Project theatre continued with the concept of group theatre as small working groups, but has a more open organizational structure than the free groups used to have. The point of departure is often a person or core group which has no affiliation to any particular stage or ensemble, with workers recruited to the project as the need arose. One Norwegian example is Verdensteatret (The World Theatre) from Oslo, with previous productions such as "Thursday 14th of October". This is a production from 1991 which has been shown on several festival stages in Europe. It was based on Strindberg's theoretical writings, and the preface to "Miss Julie" was read aloud as a monologue by an actor while others were dancing and telling funny stories in the middle of it. In their previous production, "Wednesday the 13th of October. A Composition", the visual elements were more predominant than the textual. Still, both productions were examples of a dramaturgy in quest of a new orientation in visual theatre. In the meantime, more and more emphasis has been placed on textual presentation, not in the sense of textual representation but more as an alternative to a purely dominating visuality.

This direction represents a development of using text in the following way: As based on the need of understanding text as an intermediation of references in a non-illusionary way. One could speak about the text as a type of visual implication with regard to tableaux and pictorial elements. This means that actors are reciting, acting and dancing according to textual elements based on improvisation and personal resources. They recite monologues and change between slower and faster movements marked by a steady and sharp timing. Patterns of movements are taken from the dance and theatre of the '80s like Rosas, Fabre or Needcompany. The key observation that can be made about dramaturgy is that new ways of composing and paraphrasing texts and personal improvisations are searched for. By the late 1990s, actors were moving away from a strict self-referential style of conceptual performance in the direction of a more direct communication, which more and more dispensed with the apparently "cool" expression of the 1980s. This also meant freedom in relation to technical requirements and a change from one way of expression to another, mostly with regard to non-hierarchical staging processes.

Performance such as acting based on real time, as well as stylised realism is used to compose and paraphrase textual fragments. This is combined with personal improvisation, which involves dance and show-like playing. Theatre again turns into something to be enjoyed in a direct way, instead of being purely reflected on as conceptual art. I think this has found its way into the writing of dramaturge Marianne Van Kerkhoven at the Kaaaitheater in Brussels. In the seasonal programme of 1990/91, she tried to characterise their productions by using "telling the world" as catchwords. This indicates as I would interpret it that dramaturgy is about being developed into a new kind of narrative theatre, but still with fragmentation and means of expression put on an equal footing in the sense of a visual dramaturgy.

What the difference is, is that various types of expressions will be mixed together such as in the 1960s Grotowski style, in addition to popular comedy. This can be understood as a recycling of different decades mixed with traditional or classical theatre. Recycling can be seen as being the keyword for development in the 1990s.

From a concrete viewpoint, it can be seen as an indication that elements of style from past decades are melted into new syntheses, among others the "telling the world". I really do not believe that Van Kerkhoven was thinking of any ideological or pedagogical way of telling or explaining the world. The contestation of the Brecht model with respect to didactical aspects has gone too far. It is, I think, not possible anymore to use theatre in the sense of wanting it to enlighten the world, or even being ideological or "explaining" in any sense. A "telling the world" today would probably be in a post-ideological sense, aiming at paraphrasing the world in new ways. This will certainly be based on the search for new dramaturgical forms and techniques, obscuring new ways of discovery and understanding without any ideological legitimacy. One also has to be very conscious about the media in terms of video and television, which have had an enormous impact on how audience perception is developed. The task for theatre makers could then be the utilisation of a "magical" atmosphere that takes place in a live situation with direct contact between action, performance and audience. This is the only way to develop immediate communication with the audience, instead of wrapping the world into the kind of illusionism that Richard Foreman wanted to unveil in his production of "Radio is Good. Film is Evil" at New York University in 1987. I think that Ritsaert ten Cate was aiming in the same direction in his serial projects called "Theatre beyond Television" at the Mickery Theatre in Amsterdam in the mid-1980s.

The main premise for talking about a "conscious kind of recycling" is trying to

break with illusion by ways of paraphrasing texts and images without any type of legitimacy or flirtation with pedagogics.

If the pedagogical "heritage" is still prevailing in a production, or a commercial way of thinking has gotten the better of it, theatre is as dead as the dead theatre Peter Brook wrote about in his book "The Empty Space" from 1968. This also has to do with using clichés and traditions without putting questions to them, and this is especially important to remember if one is working on classical texts. Today, dealing with traditions, as well as using styles à la mode without new questioning, is like trying to save something that is already dead. I think conscious recycling is crisscrossing all kinds of demand by adapting prevailing currents and thereby "recycling" them. Quite freely, one either puts the entire text on stage or takes it apart and paraphrases it according to both visual and textual references. Conceptuality as an aim in itself has been left behind. Many means of expression can be used to establish a direct contact with the spectators, telling something "from the world" to them. Somebody is communicating without pretending to being educational or bringing forth any type of moral legitimacy.

The blind track of the 1960s and the 1970s, in my opinion, was that groups such as Grotowski's Theatre Laboratory or the Odin Theatre were not aware of that; instead of telling about the world, they were telling about themselves. Apparently, Brecht was not aware of that as instead of telling us about the world, he tried to tell how it should be understood from a Marxist point of view.

In the following, I will try to give some examples of conscious "recycling" in the new theatre from the early 1990s, starting with Needcompany's "Julius Caesar" (Shakespeare). It was a production by Kaaitheater in 1990, co-produced by Theater am Turm in Frankfurt am Main. The director, Jan Lauwers, is himself a visual artist. He had designed a marble floor for this production, with a small platform where the actor playing Julius Caesar stood during most of the performance. There was a silent attitude.

His sadness was surely connected to the fact that he was going to be, or had already been, killed by Brutus. He then disappears from the action on stage to come back later only to distribute some wooden play horses. Lauwers was dealing with the text in a very ironic way, letting one of the actors comment on the action using a microphone. After the very textual first part, effects that one could say were of a "signalising" nature are used such as letting a spotlight suddenly fall to the floor, or letting a balloon be blown up by using an oxygen generator. One way of explaining this dramaturgy is to designate it as a dramaturgy of composition. The treatment of text is underlined by occasional

"evident" caprices. The scenic action is not necessarily covering up the textual moments or even accompanying them. This indicates a great amount of ironic distance; for instance, when Caesar is distributing the play wooden horses after he is dead all the brave soldiers are on them, having betrayed one another and riding into war again. As a composition, this production also tells something of the world. In her critique in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (1.12. 90), Sylvia Staude maintained that Lauwers has not "reduced" the text because of a German audience not understanding Flemish Dutch, but rather to create a very simple or naivistic play in relation to the friendship motive. There was no Octavius, no Lepidus, no Cicero, no senators and not even any people. Altogether, it was a recycling of different means of expression with references to a text that was also present "as such".

A corresponding simplicity is to be found in the work of the Dutch theatre group *Maatschappij Discordia*. They have for instance chosen to play entire texts instead of using fragmentation at all, such as 1990's "De Bronnen" production in Amsterdam. The title covered three plays shown en suite: "Ubu Roi" by Alfred Jarry, "The Maidens" by Jean Genet and "The Dance of Death" by August Strindberg. "De Bronnen" means "sources" and the production was directed by Jan Joris Lamers, who also had a part in it. When it was shown at the Brussels festival in 1990, a press release from the festival office presented it in the following way: *Discordia* is almost working in an American way, on the one hand with a strong respect of tradition, while on the other they throw this respect away. They have freed themselves from the traditional relationship between actor and part. Acting by illusion in creating the part is avoided, and instead, a kind of "material reality" is put on the text (my reading of the Dutch Flemish text of the press release). One could interpret this in the direction of a playful presentation of the text, based on small improvisations also with regard to the play's rhythm. In "The Dance of Dead", they start with the Lou Reed song "Nobody but You" while the actors are sitting in tableaux on a sofa and a chair. This song was dedicated to Andy Warhol, and Lamers might have thought it to be appropriate to the feeling of life that is analysed by Jarry, Genet and Strindberg, all of whom are main sources in modern drama.

So, what I then will proceed to is the Norwegian group *Baktruppen*'s production "without title", shown for the first time in continental Europe at the *Felix Meritis Theatre* in Amsterdam in March 1991, and going on tour after that to several European cities. This production was based on paraphrasing dramatic texts by Gilbert and Sullivan, Samuel Beckett and others, with the actors themselves adding personal material. Dramaturgically speaking, the production was based on anatomical and astronomical metaphoric structures. There were also strong auditive elements such as electronic sound tracks as well as musical improvisation. The structure was very cabaret-like, with

numbers of sequences giving the impression of something evident "occasionally", underlining the improvisational "touch". The audience was partially around the stage area and partially seated on chairs put on the floor in a semicircle. One could say that they had a kind of voyeuristic function as well as being in a party-like atmosphere, and beer and wine were served from a bar during the whole performance. This could also be experienced as having a ritualistic character as productions by Grotowski and Eugenio Barba did at the time, for instance, "Akropolis" in Wroclaw in 1962 or "Kaspariana" in Holstebro in 1967.

In 1991 in Amsterdam, there was a guest production by Wooster Group from New York entitled "Brace Up", which was directed by Elizabeth LeCompte. This production was based on Tsjechovs "Three Sisters" and to a certain extent, could be compared to Needcomanpany's "Julius Caesar" in the sense of using text. In a way, they have created a new play out of the old one. The actors were put in the position of creating something other than just playing their parts. They were, to put it this way, working on different performance-like principles, mixing together elements from traditional ways of acting in a very ironic way. In my opinion, the main metaphor in "Brace Up" was show or music hall. There was a conferancier who was also saying who played which part, and the presentation was partly live and partly based on video screens with dialogues or monologues. They used Japanese films as a kind of electronic commenting on the action. Nothing was occasional and understatements were quite clear, perhaps too clear. The audience were asked in a way to understand understatements according to an Anglo-Saxon sense of reason.

For this reason, I think it was not so strange that the same Touch Time Festival in Amsterdam Baktruppen, with its "unclear" and dull ways of using metaphors, were more challenging or even provoking to the spectators. I heard somebody say that we understand and know Wooster Group, but Baktruppen is more of a surprise. So, curiosity is very strong about new ways of telling the world, and "recycling" in unexpected ways is the challenge of today's new theatre, as it has developed towards even more radical dramaturgical and esthetical forms towards the end of this decade and century as well.





# **Summaries of the contributions from Erik Söderblom, Hans Henriksen, Annette Arlander and Knut Ove Arntzen.**

**Written by Knut Ove Arntzen**

## **Erik Söderblom, The Theatre Academy, Helsinki Experiencing actor's education at the Theatre Academy in Helsinki**

In his lecture, Erik Söderblom asked some basic questions about how to educate actors in relationship to the society they are based in. He showed an interest to establishing frameworks for financing, thus enabling young people to pursue professional artistic careers. Söderblom then raised questions about the rules for training, focusing on it as an ethical question. How can we as artists fulfil the expectations from the society which grants the money to maintain such an education? Are the values of education corresponding to the values of the society which grants the money? Söderblom's next major question was on how to deal with the criteria for choosing students and which students would be accepted into the courses of such an education. In addition, how the results could be registered or measured? Yet another question is whether we should skip auditions entirely and pick students based on some type of lottery system? According to Söderblom, these questions touch highly on the tension between classical training as compared to new methods, which raises some new questions. Which values are being represented in classical versus new training methods for actors? How then, can we deal with the gap between classical training and new methods so, the gap is not as big as one would think?

If we look upon the traditional romantic reception of acting, we can see that it also touches upon modernist ways of recycling ritual cultures in the modernist period. Modernism was a "tsunami" which flooded culture and destroyed traditions, leaving us with a crop on the shores to be recycled in one fashion or another. This situation created and promoted a transgression from the classical to the romantic and modernist, a transgression which has been disguised in our understanding of the classical. One answer to the questions raised is to unveil these transgressions by making them visible or registering them. From such a perspective, it is possible to claim that Stanislavsky was a shaman, although he was actually somebody who was passing on skills! What happens when these skills are being passed from generation to generation? Should the forces behind them stay secret, as some sort of hidden knowledge? Söderblom thinks

not, at least not as long as society pays the cost for retaining and keeping them alive. This touches upon the ethics of actors' training, and tells us that we have to fill the gaps between traditional and new methodologies from the conservatories of acting by offering the classical tradition on the one hand, and the new and workshop-like methods of education in all branches of theatre training, which are coming about more and more.

As the ones responsible for these traditions and the transgression of them, we have to make sure some ethical standards with regard to societal interests are maintained, with regard to both the classical and the modernist and their interaction with each other. The rules for an actor's training lies in ethics, not in the isolation of methods. There is also a contradiction in what is aimed at from an aesthetic viewpoint such as in the presentation of a play text on the one hand, or performance installations on the other. The solutions and choices made should be open-minded since it all comes down to the fact that an actor or artist in a theatre is performing in one way or another as a shaman, in the sense that the actor, by his work, is connecting spiritual realms or the realm of death with what we see and conceive of as living persons and spectators. This is a type of liminality that the theatre is confronting the spectators with, which makes a "frisson" in the sense that we always know we are watching some revelation or illusion; thus the actor is allowed to be a shaman because he shares in the making of the illusion with the spectator, and it is society itself which benefits and grows due to these artistic expressions.

The changes in actors' training as we have known them since the 1950s enable us to see new possibilities by including new circumstances and new questions, by giving impetus to the idea of change by recycling knowledge in new ways according to new questions that arise from the way society is developing. It is also question about inner and outer stimuli which correspond to the needs of society. Söderblom stressed that he is looking for a mental structure to develop, so that there will be no gap between engagement with the arts as such and the circumstances of society. The gap between traditional versus modern would therefore be bridged and different traditions recycled in new ways. The method should not become the content. The artist is representing spiritual values in society, reflected in both carnival -like approaches and ritual practices of a more religious kind. Christ was born when the light was weak, and the notion of God comes from the fear of light. This is the role of the actor, to become king for a day, helping to mind the gap between the darkness and the light to enhance the circular understanding of society, revealing the sardonic smile of somebody who is not really happy. The ritual is a game just as theatre is a game, and should be revealed skilfully by both actors and artists alike. The time has come for a more spiritual understanding of the role of an actor in society, as Söderblom indicated with a sardonic smile on his face.

**Hans Henriksen, Oslo National Academy of Arts (KHIO):  
Experiencing directors' education at the Faculty of Scenic Arts at the Oslo  
National Academy of the Arts.**

Hans Henriksen is responsible for the MA programme for directors' education at the Faculty of Scenic Arts, Oslo National Academy of Arts. He has studied at the Saint Petersburg Theatre Academy, and for many years cooperated with Irina Malochevskaya at the school, representing a very strong Russian tradition of academic education in the scenic arts, with Malochevskaya being responsible for acting and direction education at the Oslo National Academy of Arts. Henriksen has in many ways related to the Saint Petersburg school, and his reflections in his lecture must be seen from the perspective of these experiences. Henriksen stated very clearly that the traditional Norwegian training in acting and directing has been strongly related to the Stanislavsky method. However, a problem that has come up in recent years has been how to relate this method in a relevant way to a new generations of students, creating the problem of how to reinvest, remake and recycle it. To be able to reinvest one has to realise that different traditions may need different approaches with regard to existing rules, touching upon both the recipients of this knowledge when it comes to society itself, as well as the spectators. We know that systems may become monolithic or stiff, which is the core of the problem Henriksen wanted to raise.

The main concern is that modernism as a paradigmatic change in the understanding of the arts was not taken seriously by either the Russian or Norwegian theatre. This seen in relation to how traditions would settle and be maintained, regardless of the fact that strong impulses from modernism would pop up during some periods. "Scientific realism" would be taking the better of the Russian tradition and "Ibsen realism" the Norwegian. The Ibsen tradition became very dominant in the Norwegian theatre, with the education drawing on the Stanislavsky method in order to enable it to flourish. But, indeed, that would be a very conservative understanding. New positions had to be developed, which also included an understanding of Stanislavsky. This was what the St. Petersburg academy could offer us, at least in terms of showing that a rethinking would be possible. In Norway, Brechtian ways of thinking about the theatre were already added to this tradition, but in a postmodern situation new impulses had to be found and introduced to ensure the venue of a new direction in theatrical trends.

But, and that is the crucial point Henriksen wanted to make, in order to be able to rethink a position you have to develop it and go to new depths with it. That is what we needed Irina Malochevskaya for, Henriksen said quite clearly. Thus, the experience of the 20<sup>th</sup> century as it had already been encapsulated would need a new understanding to see if we could find ways of rethinking, or even remaking or reinvesting it. We had to go to the edge of the Stanislavsky tradition and ask how the master teacher could be replaced by the workshop leader. This meant that the authoritarian way of sticking to masters had to be re-examined to see if a less authoritarian and more open way of understanding tradition could be found and even pedagogically attempted. Could workshops replace the traditional studio, and what kind of workshop methods were at hand? Questioning this is a new position in and of itself, and one of the directions taken would be the revising of a theatre's traditional position. We need to know the basics of traditions in a less authoritarian way before we can set about finding new approaches to pedagogical positions. We are in that process so to speak was the statement that Hans Henriksen wanted to make in his lecture.

**Knut Ove Arntzen:  
Introduction to aspects of acting and performance art**

As a chair of the seminar, Knut Ove Arntzen made a statement on various aspects of acting and performance art. Arntzen underscored the necessity of understanding the figurativity of the body as the main aspect of acting pedagogics, and his short contribution based on re-theatricalisation and the significance of Antonin Artaud as the predecessor of late modern and early postmodern acting. The training of the body, free acting known from Grotowski, the Odin Theatre in addition to Julian Beck, Judith Malina and The Living Theatre, gave an impulse as to the way body was used in a stylised way in postmodern theatre. This also relates to physical theatre and some historical traditions such as the Commedia dell'Arte, and has surely created a contrast to our perception of the Stanislavsky method. Some of these aspects were presented more in detail in a lecture that Arntzen gave on February 3, 2009, to students in Fredrikstad.

## **Annette Arlander: The Theatre Academy, Helsinki: Experiencing ecological performance and how to teach it at the Theatre Academy of Helsinki.**

As a performance artist herself, Annette Arlander has emphasised performance art in relation to natural surroundings. As a result of this, she was attracted to the question of ethics, raising ecological questions of performance. She has been head of the MA programme in performance art and theory at the Theatre Academy of Helsinki which she developed from its inception. At first, it was oriented towards the theatrical and dramaturgical, but later on she related it more to the roots of performance art as part of Fluxus movement and other happenings. Since the 1970s and 1980s, she has tried to put the accent on what we think of as more traditional or “classical” performance art so as not to merge it into theatrical practices. This reorientation towards “traditional” performance art is parallel to her ecological orientation, and coincides with her work as both a professor of performance art and that of an artist. Her artistic work has been related quite a bit to an island in the archipelago outside of Helsinki, which she presented in a very interesting and rewarding way to the seminar along with her pedagogical experiences.

Arlander explained her quest for pedagogical methods to be applied in her courses on performance art and which priorities would tell her what to look for. She presented four approaches: the language of action art developed by Anthony Howell, site-specific and durational performance work, autobiographical performance work in which she also referred to Dee Heddon’s book “Autobiography & Performance”, and work with event scores based on Ken Friedman’s Fluxus workbook among others. Bruno Latour is an important philosopher to Annette Arlander and his thinking related to ecological issues has also exerted an influence on her pedagogical thinking. With regard to Annette Arlander’s work as a performance artist, she presented a project in 2008 entitled “Year of the pig”, belonging to a project series she has done on a small island in Helsinki’s archipelago. The project is based on the figure of the weathervane reflecting and reacting to both wind and wind direction, and is kind of a portrait of a landscape with a turning body. It is also part of an idea of performing landscapes, which can be related to either natural or historical landscapes. Important to Annette Arlander is the observation by Latour on how matters of fact (such as air, water etc.) have turned into matters of concern, which have implications for religion, politics, culture and aesthetics. She wants to focus on this network of connections by also documenting changes in the landscape from second to second and hour to hour with a camera mounted on a tripod.

The body is her own and she wears a grey scarf being blown in different

directions by the wind. This scarf can remind you of Isadora Duncan, and Arlander speaks about the body, the scarf and the wind as unity. “The scarf catches the light when it is sunny and also the wind and reflects the body”, to quote from her lecture. In this context, the water is the destabilising element in a network of connections with nature, as well as with changing landscapes driven by the weather as a machine. This then becomes a type of entry into the 21<sup>st</sup> century for Annette Arlander. It relates to the three ecologies discussed by Félix Guattari: the social, nature and the mind.

To summarise, Arlander’s major present position with regard to her MA course in performance art is that you have to know the history of performance art to understand and develop it in a contemporary context. In this way, she is pursuing a recycling perspective based on performance art since the beginning of its heyday in the 1970s and 1980s. This pedagogical position, however, creates a problem in understanding of whether its orientation should lay in the historical or present day situation. This became a major topic for discussion at the seminar in terms of historical orientation versus “contemporaneity” in pedagogics. Questions were raised touching upon the recycling phenomenon as well as the need to understand tradition, versus the question of remaking and reinvestment, and of course the recycling aspect that John Keefes touched so clearly upon in his lecture.